

I thank the gentleman.

There are a lot of areas of agreement. We all agree that we are in the midst of a long term care crisis.

We agree that today there are 10 million Americans in need of long term care services and support. By 2020, that number will grow to 15 million and by 2050 that number of seniors that need long term care will reach 26 million.

The costs associated with long term care are high. Nursing homes can cost over \$70,000 a year and 20 hours a week of home care can cost nearly \$20,000. But repealing the CLASS Act does nothing to address the glaring need for adequate coverage for long term care services and support.

The CLASS Act addressed a number of critical needs including providing a way for persons with disabilities to remain independent in their community and bringing private dollars into the long term services system to reduce reliance on Medicaid without impoverishing individuals and families.

We also agree that the CLASS Act is far from perfect, but it does provide a framework to begin to deal with the problem. So if we all agree on the need - not only the need for long term care but the need to do better - than instead of repealing the CLASS Act and passing HR 1173 with no effective alternative, we could right now today sit down and work together to repair this program. By ignoring or even postponing this long term crisis, simply is not going to make it go away.